

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows.

Please cancel claims 1-76.

Please add new claims 77-141 as follows:

—77. (New) A network system comprising:
a service;
an agent operable to use the service on behalf of a principal and to consume a service resource while using the service;
an agent server operable to mediate the use of the service by the agent; and
a service wrapper associated with the service, the service wrapper operable to monitor the consumption of the service resource by the agent.

78. (New) The network system of Claim 77 wherein the service wrapper is operable to terminate the agent in response to the monitoring.

79. (New) The network system of Claim 77 wherein the agent server is operable to charge the principal for the consumption of the service resource.

80. (New) The network system of Claim 77 further comprising a service permission associated with the service resource and the agent, the service permission specifying a predetermined amount of the service resource which the agent is allowed to consume.

81. (New) The network system of Claim 77 further comprising a service permission associated with the service resource and the principal, the service permission

specifying a predetermined amount of the service resource which is allowed to be consumed on behalf of the principal.

82. (New) The network system of Claim 77 wherein the service resource comprises elapsed time for a telephone call.

83. (New) The network system of Claim 77 wherein the service resource comprises cost for a telephone call.

84. (New) The network system of Claim 77 wherein the service wrapper is operable to translate between a first instruction set and a second instruction set.

85. (New) The network system of Claim 77 further comprising a user interface coupled to the agent server, the user interface operable to allow a user to create, modify, or delete an agent template from which the agent is created.

86. (New) The network system of Claim 77 further comprising a user interface coupled to the agent server, the user interface operable to allow a user to create, modify, or delete the agent.

87. (New) The network system of Claim 86 wherein the user interface comprises a graphical user interface.

88. (New) The network system of Claim 87 wherein the graphical user interface comprises:

a web server resident in the network system; and
a web browser resident in a user device.

89. (New) The network system of Claim 86 wherein the user interface comprises a voice user interface.

90. (New) The network system of Claim 89 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech recognition application.

91. (New) The network system of Claim 89 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech synthesis application.

92. (New) The network system of Claim 89 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech playback device.

93. (New) The network system of Claim 77 wherein the service comprises a user interface service operable to provide a user interface by which the agent can interact with a user.

94. (New) The network system of Claim 93 wherein the user interface comprises a graphical user interface.

95. (New) The network system of Claim 94 wherein the graphical user interface comprises:

a web server resident in the network system; and

a web browser resident in a user device.

96. (New) The network system of Claim 93 wherein the user interface comprises a voice user interface.

97. (New) The network system of Claim 96 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech recognition application.

98. (New) The network system of Claim 96 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech synthesis application.

99. (New) The network system of Claim 96 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech playback device.

100. (New) The network system of Claim 77 wherein the service supports at least one of voice mail, electronic mail, electronic appointment book, electronic address book, and on-line data retrieval.

101. (New) A network system comprising:
a user interface operable to allow a user to interact with the network system; and
an agent server coupled to the user interface, the agent server operable to manage the operation of a programmable functionality component of the network system, the agent server in conjunction with the user interface operable to create, modify, or delete an agent in response to interaction by the user, the agent operable to consume a service resource as the agent uses a service on behalf of the user.

102. (New) The network system of Claim 101 wherein the user interface comprises a graphical user interface.

103. (New) The network system of Claim 102 wherein the graphical user interface comprises a web browser application.

104. (New) The network system of Claim 101 wherein the user interface comprises a voice user interface.

105. (New) The network system of Claim 104 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech recognition application.

106. (New) The network system of Claim 104 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech synthesis application.

107. (New) The network system of Claim 104 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech playback device.

108. (New) The network system of Claim 101 wherein the user interface comprises an agent area for creating, modifying, or deleting the agent.

109. (New) The network system of Claim 101 wherein the service supports at least one of voice mail, electronic mail, electronic appointment book, electronic address book, and on-line data retrieval.

110. (New) The network system of Claim 101 further comprising a service wrapper associated with the service, the service wrapper operable to cooperate with the agent server to mediate interaction between the service and the agent.

111. (New) The network system of Claim 110 wherein the service wrapper is operable to convert between a first computer language used by the agent and a second computer language used by the service.

112. (New) The network system of Claim 110 wherein the service wrapper is operable to monitor the amount of service resource consumed by the agent when the agent utilizes the service.

113. (New) A method comprising:
admitting a user to a network system wherein at least one agent is operable to consume a service resource while utilizing a service to perform a task for the user; and
allowing the user to create, modify, or delete the agent within the network system.

114. (New) The method of Claim 113 further comprising accepting an agent command from the user.

115. (New) The method of Claim 114 wherein the agent command is one of a create agent command, an edit agent command, and a delete agent command.

116. (New) The method of Claim 113 further comprising suspending execution of the agent.

117. (New) The method of Claim 113 further comprising accepting a template command from the user.

118. (New) The method of Claim 117 further comprising allowing the user to create, modify, or delete an agent template within the network system.

119. (New) The method of Claim 113 further comprising admitting the user to an agent area of a user interface.

120. (New) A network system comprising:
an agent server operable to manage the operation of a programmable functionality component of the network system;

a service;

an agent operable to consume a service resource while utilizing the service; and

a service wrapper associated with the service, the service wrapper operable to cooperate with the agent server to mediate interaction between the service and the agent.

121. (New) The network system of Claim 120 wherein the service wrapper comprises a monitor, the monitor operable to monitor the amount of the service resource consumed by the agent when the agent utilizes the service.

122. (New) The network system of Claim 120 wherein the service wrapper comprises a converter, the converter operable to convert between a first computer language used by the agent and a second computer language used by the service.

123. (New) The network system of Claim 122 wherein the converter comprises an agent server to service converter for converting from the first computer language to the second computer language.

124. (New) The network system of Claim 122 wherein the converter comprises a service to agent server converter for converting from the second computer language to the first computer language.

125. (New) The network system of Claim 120 wherein the service supports at least one of voice mail, electronic mail, electronic appointment book, electronic address book, and on-line data retrieval.

126. (New) The network system of Claim 120 further comprising a user interface operable to allow a user to interact with the network system in order to create the agent.

127. (New) The network system of Claim 126 wherein the user interface comprises a graphical user interface.

128. (New) The network system of Claim 127 wherein the graphical user interface comprises a web browser application.

129. (New) The network system of Claim 127 wherein the user interface comprises a voice user interface.

130. (New) The network system of Claim 129 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech recognition application.

131. (New) The network system of Claim 129 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech synthesis application.

132. (New) The network system of Claim 129 wherein the voice user interface comprises a speech playback device.

133. (New) The network system of Claim 120 further comprising an agent object associated with the agent and resident in the agent server, the agent object comprising data and instructions executable within the agent server.

134. (New) The network system of Claim 120 further comprising an agent object associated with the agent and resident in the agent server, the agent object comprising a permission for the agent.

135. (New) A method comprising:
allowing an agent to consume a service resource while utilizing a service; and
mediating interaction between the service and the agent.

136. (New) The method of Claim 135 wherein mediating comprises monitoring the amount of a service resource consumed by the agent.

137. (New) The method of Claim 135 wherein mediating comprises:
identifying a service permission required in order for the agent to consume the service resource; and

determining whether the agent holds the required service permission.

138. (New) The method of Claim 135 wherein mediating comprises:
receiving an instruction which requires that the agent consume the service resource associated with the service when the agent utilizes the service;

identifying an amount of the service resource which would be consumed if the instruction is executed;

identifying an amount of the service resource allotted to the agent; and
determining whether the amount which is allotted is greater than or equal to the amount which would be consumed.

139. (New) The method of Claim 138 wherein mediating comprises:
executing the instruction if the amount which is allotted is greater than or equal to the amount which would be consumed; and

subtracting the amount which would be consumed from the amount which is allotted.

140. (New) The method of Claim 135 further comprising converting between a first computer language used by an agent and a second computer language used by the service.